

Survey for utilization of fruits and vegetables in NER

1951. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been carried out by Government for utilization of fruits and vegetables for processing in the North Eastern States, particularly in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of assistance, if any, given by way of cold storage, food testing etc. to State/private entrepreneurs; and

(d) whether any funds have been granted by Government for setting up food processing industries in the North-East Zone, particularly in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (d) The level of processing of fruits and vegetables in the country is estimated to be around 2%. Though no specific survey has been conducted by the Ministry regarding utilization of fruits and vegetables for processing covering the entire North Eastern region, a study has been got conducted by the Ministry on potential for Food Processing Industries in Cachar District of Assam. The report presents the prevailing scenario in Cachar District and Barak Valley with regard to Agricultural and Horticultural Produce, Current utilization pattern and prospects of development of food processing industries in that area. The report reveals that Pineapple, Jackfruit, Arecanut etc. constitute major raw material resources in the District for industrial exploitation.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, under its different plan schemes provides financial assistance in the form of grant in aid to various implementing agencies, for the overall development of Food Processing Industry. During the Xth Plan period, so far, the Ministry has approved 84 proposals under different schemes in the North Eastern Region and has released a total assistance of Rs. 23.20 Crore during this period. In Assam 45 proposals have been approved and an assistance of Rs. 12.04 Crore has been released during this period. Two Cold Storages (one each in Manipur and Meghalaya) involving a total assistance of Rs. 47.97 lakhs and one Testing laboratory in Assam involving an assistance of

Rs. 250 lakhs have been sanctioned in the North Eastern Region during the Xth Plan.

FDI in food processing sector

1952. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a section of agro-based food processing companies have been given approval for 100 per cent FDI but the industry in general has expressed its reservations;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any decision to enact a legislation in this regard; and

(c) if not, what are the main reasons for delay and by what time, a final decision for introducing the legislation would be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) Government has put in place a liberal and transparent policy on FDI according to which FDI upto 100% is permitted, under the automatic route in most sectors including food processing sector except food retail and items reserved for small scale industrial sector. The FDI scheme is incorporated in the FEMA Regulations. The proposals requiring prior government approval are considered by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board in a time bound manner. The policy is reviewed on a continuous basis for further liberalization/rationalization. Besides putting in place an attractive and investment-friendly policy with a high degree of automaticity, the government has also renewed thrust on the investment promotion front through informative publications on investment opportunities and organizing various investment promotion events in India and abroad in association with industry associations.

New projects/units for food processing

1953. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether many new projects/units have been established during the last five years;

(b) if so the details thereof year-wise and State-wise with the sanction and help of Government;